The Tragedy of Matthew Perry and America's Profound Addiction to Drugs

The laundry list of drug abuse in Matthew Perry's home and, according to his autopsy report, in his body is shocking but no doubt his and the drugs involved in his death are representative of a much larger, shocking, recently exposed, epidemic.

By Alex Berenson

Matthew Perry plays Chandler Bing in "Friends." Public Domain Photo

Mix a dog, mix a bat. Subscribe to Alex Berenson's Substack to read the rest of the post.

California sober.

If you haven't heard the phrase before, it's [California Sober](#) is a clever way to say, "We quit drinking or using drugs, but not entirely yet." Because cannabis doesn't count. Cannabis is "medicine."

Occasionally people who use the phrase extend it even further, usually to psychedelics.

Perry was a California Sober man. And, it's safe to say, he was not sober at all.

I kept thinking about California sobriety as I read Matthew Perry's autopsy report, a tragic and depressing document of the way far too many Americans live now.

Matthew Langford Perry, who played Chandler Bing on the hit NBC sitcom "Friends," was found dead in a jacuzzi at his home in Los Angeles on Saturday, October 28, 2023. He was 54. His death was initially reported as accidental drowning, but the autopsy found no evidence of water in his lungs — with minimal exceptions.

Jim wrote: I firmly believe amputation should be public. As a 10th-century Egyptian king once said, "Punishment is not for the benefit of the victim, but for the benefit of the public." "The dead have no rights and can suffer no wrongs." But maybe they can. Maybe they should. Maybe they do.

Perry was a quintessential Californian man-child, though he was born in Massachusetts and raised in Canada. His parents split when he was young and he farmed Dallas to Hollywood as an infant or toddler.

"Friends" started in 1994, when Perry was only 25, and was so immediate and successful that it changed the geography of the way far too many Americans live. By the late 1990s, all or of the "Friends" had fame and fortune.

After the show ended in 2004, all of the cast members could afford to escape their youth and move forward with their lives. Not Perry. He was one of the few who couldn't. Instead, he fell into a pit of addiction that, by the end, was a decades-old nightmare and bankrupted his career.

To quote [Kelly Link](#): "He's back with a pile or to light up your snowflake there's no [illegible] and you're the star."

(We'll talk about that the real-estate investor online story.)

"The Wuhan Cover-Up" by Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

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Perry filled the void, or tried to, with drugs and alcohol.

He had a huge appetite for opioids in particular. As he explained in his 2022 memoir, he spent most of his life either using, recovering or fighting to stay sober. He went to rehab 15 times. His career likely lasted as long as it did because he had a star for it and competently, especially after Netflix introduced a new generation to "Friends."

Judging by his comments and the locations in Perry's post, that first term was his longest period of sobriety and ended during pandemic lockdowns, despite the decades of isolation and bankruptcies he'd endured. He was back to drinking and using during the NeTwo years. The other five Friends seem genuinely guided by his death.

His celebrity, his money and his charm kept him alive longer than the circumstances of drug use, but they couldn't stop his body from shutting. In 2018, he had a colon perforation. He was hospitalized for a month. He underwent his required 14 surgeries and five months of hospitalizations.

Then Perry got sober.

Sort of.

The autopsy report explains in its first paragraph that Perry was "reportedly clean for 15 months." But later in the same paragraph, it explains he "was on ketamine infusion therapy."

Ketamine is a powerful anesthetic generally used to sedate children and animals, allowing to street names is "horse tranquilizer." because, well, it's a horse drug. It's also a powerful, fast-acting treatment-resistant depression. There's even a name for that: [how left their house](#).

But it can have hallucinatory and euphoric effects too. It is commonly found as a recreational drug and has become a popular treatment because it is so addictive, though not as addictive as opioids.

"It's just a very strange drug — the strangest drug," a researcher told New York Magazine in 2019. Ketamine clinics have not used just about every drug since told me ketamine had the most powerful effects of any I took.

Lately, ketamine "therapy" has taken off in the U.S. A website called "Get Ground" lists 1,000 ketamine clinics in the U.S. and Canada. Insurance companies and Millboards advertising it even over major cities.

Ketamine's advocates point to studies showing it is a fast-acting treatment for depression. "Following the excitement and hopeful expectations generated by its striking antidepressant effects, numerous private clinics started offering ketamine infusions, sometimes at exhausted doctors," researchers wrote in 2018.

"A large body of well-established evidence has not been fully investigated or integrated into a unified understanding."

But because the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved ketamine for human use, physicians are free to prescribe it as they see fit to rule that applies to every approved drug, except marijuana, and that's also a story for another time.

A bit of horse tranquilizer will turn that frown upside down!

And ketamine therapy is very profitable. (Treatments advertised on billboards usually cost $400 to $800 per session. Perry's ketamine infusions were likely usually in the range of $1,000 to $1,500, cash or card upfront, please.

Of course, the price was no problem for Perry.

For a while, he was receiving ketamine infusions twice a week. He was addicted to the drug, which is not surprising. Even if he didn't crave it, the infusions attractions don't recommend dosing so that a schedule for more than two weeks.

In his memoir, Perry wrote that ketamine "has my name written all over it," that he usually used it to feel normal and that he'd "be in a lot of trouble if I ever had a giant floppy thought" though he did not like the hangovers that followed.

In other words, Perry was using ketamine for a short-term high, knowing that he'd pay for it afterward. He was a drug addict using a drug addictively.

About six months before he died he switched doctors to one who was more open to his dependence on ketamine, telling him he didn't need infusions every other day. His rate in effect was about 10 days before he died.

By then the drug had its hooks in Perry. His autopsy report shows he died of the "acute effects of ketamine." Ketamine was the immediate cause of death, though the underlying causes were "coronary artery disease" and "opioid use disorder."

We will probably never know where he got the dose that killed him, but the medical examiner found residue in his stomach, indicating he'd ingested it.

RFK Jr. and Brian Hooker's New Book: "Vax-Unvax"

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The description of Perry as "dead" seems to refer mainly to his opioid use. Yet even that isn't true.

At the time of his death, Perry was taking buprenorphine — "Suboi" — an opioid sold by prescription. Like methadone, to prevent cousin, buye is relatively weak but long-lasting.

The goal of buye is not to get a user clean, but clean enough. Clean enough to function enough that he won't chase heroin or fentanyl or other illegal opioids to maintain.

Physicians and drug advocacy groups euphemistically refer to this form of doctor-prescribed addiction as "medication-assisted treatment" and point out that people on it are less likely to overdose than those who try to go cold turkey. That, and it good reason to keep prescribing buye to addicts.

But buye — like methadone — cannot help but feel like a surrender to the idea of addiction. You don't feel like someone who has overcome addiction. You feel like a junkie.

In fact, the autopsy report shows that Perry was taking "50 mg" of buprenorphine per day. That's a huge dose. It's enough to overwhelm many people's unusual circumstances, but unsurprising given his long addiction history and that he was "hoping to be weaned down."

But not entirely.

The autopsy also mentions in passing that Perry was found to have lorazepam detected and a close chemical relative of lorazepam detected in his blood. Both Xanax and Klonopin are both "benzos" — benzodiazepines, potent anti-anxiety drugs that are also addictive and dangerous.

So, Aside from his ketamine infusions, the buye, the lorazepam and probably the nicotine vapes and lozenges, Perry was stone-cold sober.

California sober.

On top of that, detectives found a veritable pharmacopeia when they searched Perry's house.

The 20 drugs listed below include a statin and metformin, given for diabetes, as well as an antidepressant, a second antidepressant also prescribed for anxiety, smoking medicine, a mood stabilizer, and an antipsychotic medicine that is often given as an anti-anxiety treatment.

Plus what might be called lifestyle medicines: generic Viagra and Cialis, the hair loss drug finasteride and modafinil, a drug for narcolepsy. The autopsy also found Perry had been treating him "angry and heavy" in recent weeks.

None of this is meant to judge Perry.

Several of his prescriptions were medically necessary by any standard. Many have lived to more the effects of his addiction and struggles and the long-term battle things or prescription testosterone wrecked. And Perry clearly knew how dangerous his addictions were. He'd been to rehab 15 times.

But what the laundry list shows at least is just how deeply Perry and his physicians who treated him had internalized the better-living-through-chemistry mantra that our pharmaceutical industry so successfully markets.

No wonder he and the people around him defined sobriety so loosely.

And no wonder he was so far from truly shaking his dependencies on drugs when ketamine finally killed him.

Originally published on Alex Berenson's Substack post, Unreported Truths.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Children's Health Defense.

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Alex Berenson
Alex Berenson is the author of 11 books, including "The Wuhan Cover-Up" and "The Unreported Truth's Pandemic."

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Best Newest Oldest

Sandra Lowell
2 days ago
Sounds like the experienced MD/RN drivers placed absolutely no role in cardiac decline according to the medical examiner because it was not mentioned. I'm not saying all those drugs didn't kill him, but I'm saying the medical examiner is not to be trusted.
Reply Share

Kelly Hayes
2 days ago
I was wondering the same thing.....no mentions of him taking his pills, which to me was always starting.
Reply Share

Alex Ewa Brandon
2 days ago
And if I have to read one more article that says that Perry died "as a result of the effects of ketamine" I'm going to scream. Ketamine is not a lethal drug. It's not even a particularly dangerous drug. It's a dissociative anesthetic. It's not a depressant.

The only thing that is going to be done to the corpse of Perry is an autopsy so as to be smart and educated.

Roger Nadeau is an anesthesiologist recently co-authored his book about how ketamine is a safe and effective treatment for depression. I've read every word of it. I know what you find yourself in a position to ask me a question about ketamine, please feel free to ask me. I'm not a doctor, but I've done a lot of research on it. I'm not a doctor, but I've done a lot of research on it. And those are the only two things I'm not a doctor, but I've done a lot of research on it.

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Reply Share

Crystal Lowell
2 days ago
Exactly. I'm not a doctor but I've done a lot of research on it.
Reply Share

Alex Ewa Brandon
2 days ago
Well then hopefully that'll continue on with more incredible Covid-19 vaccine injuries.
Reply Share

Lisa Ann
2 days ago
Yes, I'm not a doctor but I've done a lot of research on it

patriotmom
24 days ago

How very sad. It seems that happiness was elusive to him - he was looking in all the wrong places. May he RIP.

5 0 Reply • Share ›

tony
23 days ago

He was the ultimate propagandist for the clots shots... "Can I be any more vaccinated?" was his question after his 6th shot. Let's get real her ppl
Vaxxecuted - Hollywood style

4 0 Reply • Share ›

LinUK
24 days ago

What a sad story. A man who had 'everything' and yet nothing at all.
Isaiah 55:6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Gary Brown
23 days ago

Vaccinated no more! Oct 28, 2023 Matthew Perry: "Could I BE Any More Vaccinated?"

Which leads to the relevant part — Perry proudly promoted and sold a "Could I BE Any More Vaccinated" shirt and urged his 7 million followers to get jabbed: I really hate how this poison jab has divided our world. I would love to go back to a time when funny people were allowed to just be funny.

https://wltreport.com/2023/...

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Kim from Brooklyn
23 days ago

The sad ending to Perry's life and his only wish was to be able to continue to help those addicted and suffering mental disturbances and societal pressures that we are all under right now, I would like to offer the only thing that holds any weight these days.

And that is that Friends are the family we never had. Friends many times are who we can go to when we are sad, the first person to go to when we are happy and the only person to go when we want an honest opinion,

Here's to my friends here at CHD. To staff and editors and proof readers and even those that seem to want to destroy all that is good.....My love and blessings go to you. We are all in this together.

As John Lennon once sang.....Imagine.....Peace!

2 0 Reply • Share ›

Tina
24 days ago

Alex Berenson: Your crude comments about Buprenorphine indicate a lack of knowledge about its use or whom benefits from it and the many patients who then get off of it. I am Board Certified in Addiction Medicine and have been taking care of patients with substance use problems for about 12 years. Medication Assisted Treatment is not a "euphemism", it is a fact. We don't believe in "better living through chemistry" and I am surprised you used that phrase since you are married to a practicing physician. Fentanyl is generally smoked because it gets into the drug stream faster. It is also one of the most addictive narcotics that is abused. Buprenorphine is given to remove this drug from the receptor in a dose that keeps you from going into withdrawal and keeps you sober because of the long term biological effects on the brain and receptors that have altered the mu receptor. Patients simply cannot go from Fentanyl to "nothing". If, as a medical science writer, you had completed even 5 minutes of research on this topic, you would know this. I have patients who have been on this drug for years who are now sober, working full time, or going to school and maintaining relationships. They are not high; they are not Matthew Perry. Their lives have been turned around. I also have patients who then decide to wean off the medication. I support both approaches. And finally, neither you nor I know if this was a non intentional overdose or if he committed suicide. He was, after all, alone when it happened and has had significant medical and psychiatric problems.

To the Defender: Your usual medical writer, Michael Neradakis, is superior to Alex Berenson. He does his homework and does not get on a soapbox with his personal opinions. Please do not continue to lower the standard of this website with any more diatribe from writers like Berenson. I am truly appalled you did this.

3 1 Reply • Share ›

Larry Cox → Tina
24 days ago

This is an opinion piece, not a science piece. And the situation - especially in America - has gone way beyond the point where we should all be very worried. I support Alex's work in trying to get us to notice how addicted we have become.

3 0 Reply • Share ›

Jenjen → Tina
24 days ago

My honours project on Methadone and Buprenorphine, published in British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology (2012), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.go...

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Unkski Ped → Tina
24 days ago edited

Well said, and thank you. To me Berenson comes off as a relatively clueless pompous know it all in this arena.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Isthisthingon
23 days ago

I stepped right out of the Loop on all of this apparently. I never saw any of Matthew Perry's ads on just how stabbed he truly was...not one. Wow. I'm truly amazed at how much his body actually took before the intentional extermination finally overwhelmed him. I'm sure the Perps are studying the data on him and feel pretty confident in their new Death Dust they plan on using on us...where are the "trials" taking place, how many Constitutional Rights have they wiped their asses with now?

Zombie Apocalypse is already here! So many weak, sick and of course addicted! Just how the perps/DOD want us!

I have a friend traveling for the holidays and she is desperately trying to find Food Worth Eating! I told her to just Fast as much as possible.

We all are going to have to get used to people dropping dead all around us from here on out. Anyone not showing awareness of what is really going on is ultimately lost already at this stage of the PSYOP/CON.

We don't even know if Matthew Perry was really stabbed at all or if he was just pushing it for the perps like so many celebs these days.

Bless this mess!

1 0 Reply • Share ›

TheOrneryNurse
23 days ago

No man or woman in their early 50s should be on that many medications. I would even dare to say no human being of any age should be on that many medications. Polypharmacy has been a problem for decades (often with multiple doctors prescribing multiple drugs without communicating with other providers). It is medical negligence at best and malfeasance at worst. While every person has responsibility for his or her own actions (no one forced these drugs down his throat), I would partly blame the medical system for this tragedy. His doctors, nurses and therapists failed him miserably!

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Beatrice → TheOrneryNurse
23 days ago

A person's medical record, including prescriptions, is easily viewed by any doctor.

I told a new dentist that I wasn't on any medications and she thought I was lying and asked me to be honest with her. I don't do drugs- any drugs- legal or not. I'm 63 but most people younger and older than I, take at least one prescribed medication and it's more common that even kids are taking at least two.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Ektor
23 days ago

If millions of people are not addicted to drugs, then big pharma goes poof! That is the only way they can survive because their products do not work to make you healthier and disease free. Drugs are the disease.

1 0 Reply • Share ›

Deb Witter
20 hours ago

Wow, that is an incredibly sad story... His family must be devastated. Bummer.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Lauren Omartian
16 days ago

This piece could have been written with compassion and respect for the decendent. Too bad its tone is snarky and its content misinformed. For those who want to learn more about the potential risks of benzodiazepines, check out this site: www.benzoinfo.com

0 0 Reply • Share ›

MultiChubby1
23 days ago

So horse tranquilizer is OK, but horse dewormer is not. If I were a comedian, I would run with that.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Lana Lorenzen
23 days ago edited

Drug availability and abuse won't stop any more than war will stop: It's too profitable--billions and trillions of dollars. Drug money is circulated throughout all the major banking systems, governments, intelligence agencies, and militaries of the world. What do people think funds the intelligence community and their Black Operations, their Unacknowledged Special Access Projects (which are outside the purview of the President) and the Acknowledged Special Access Projects?
It's certainly not taxes; taxes barely cover the interest on the national debt.

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Kim from Brooklyn
23 days ago

https://www.google.com/sear...

0 0 Reply • Share ›

Larry Cox
24 days ago

This is a copy of Alex's substack article which he wrote very recently.

When I was in junior high, I was exposed to a school-wide anti-drug presentation which I took very seriously. I only exposed myself to any types of drugs for a year when I was 25 years old. And since then I have learned the difference between feeling "well" for a period of time and actually getting well and staying well for the long haul.

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